



Michigan Caregiver Facts 2008

Some 19,116 caregivers were served in 2007 through programs funded by the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging (OSA). Programs included respite care, adult day care, counseling, caregiver training, and transportation.

Caregiver Statistics

Of the caregivers served throughout Michigan,

- 37% were employed full- or part-time
- 72% were female
- 50% were younger than age 65
- 41% lived in rural areas
- 24% were low-income
- 37% were daughters or daughters-in-law
- 30% were spouses
- 20% were minority by race and/or ethnicity
- 75% provided hands-on services to their care receivers
- 68% had been a caregiver for more than one year
- 42% had been a caregiver for more than three years
- 58% lived with the individuals they care for
- 33% traveled up to one hour to provide care

Caregiver Demands

According to the Family Caregiver Alliance (www.caregiver.org), juggling demands of a job and caring for a loved one put extra stress on caregiving families. Already millions of working adults are juggling the competing demands of caring for a chronically ill or disabled parent, raising a family, and managing a career. An estimated 25% of households in our country are involved in caring for a loved one aged 50 or older. In Michigan, it is estimated that 1.3 million caregivers provide 1.4 billion hours of unpaid care annually, having an economic value of over \$9 billion per year.



Working Caregivers

Between one-third and one-half of all caregivers are employed outside the home. Working caregivers sacrifice leisure time and often suffer stress-related illnesses. Negative effects on working caregivers include time lost from work, lower productivity, quitting a job to give care, lost career opportunities, and lower future earnings. It is estimated that about 12% of working caregivers quit their jobs to provide full-time care. Work disruptions due to employee caregiving responsibilities result in productivity losses to U.S. employers estimated at \$11-29 billion annually. Consequently, these employed caregivers must find community resources, deal with legal/financial issues, handle stress, and find assistance from their employers.

Employers can help by offering "cafeteria style" employee benefits, such as allowing employees to select supplemental dependent care coverage to reimburse costs of in-home or adult day care as well as offering job-sharing or flexible scheduling. Employers also can offer employees therapeutic counseling to alleviate stress, or provide information on helpful resources, such as the Eldercare Locator at <http://eldercare.gov/Eldercare/Public/Home.asp>.

Larger businesses can organize in-house caregiver support groups; coordinate with local community groups or hospitals so employees can attend outside support groups; or provide flexible work hours, family illness days or leave time opportunities. Also, businesses with 50 or more employees are required to comply with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which allows up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a seriously ill parent, spouse or child while protecting job security. Smaller firms also can use the FMLA guidelines to provide support for individual employees.